

April 2020

# MANAGING YOUR FACILITIES

Newsletter for the National School Plant Management Association



**Keith W. Watkins, CDF, NSPMA President**  
Assistant Director of Facilities  
City School District of New Rochelle, NY

*Stronger & Better!*

It has certainly been a whirlwind since our joint NSPMA/SCSPMA Conference in Myrtle Beach in February. NSPMA celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and SCSPMA their 40<sup>th</sup>! Thanks to so many people who had a hand in this conference to make it an unforgettable event. Everyone's dedication in providing such a high level professional development opportunity for all attendees was very noticeable. Being our largest and most attended conference ever, certainly speaks volumes to where we're headed and what our collaborative efforts will provide for our membership. I would also like to acknowledge the many new

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states and past ones that found value in attending this year and becoming “official” members again, or joining for the first time. *We are stronger and better together!*

I don’t think anyone could’ve predicted the times and conditions we’re dealing with related to the Coronavirus and specifically COVID-19. We have certainly entered into some unknown times in our facilities world related to our students, staff and community. In my almost 30 years of working in NYS public school facilities departments, I’ve learned there’s always a silver lining and you should never underestimate the power of a good crisis! For many of us as a school district and community, we have come together during this unprecedented time and been asked to take our normally “in house” provided resources, and made them mobile. Many facilities departments are serving and delivering meals, Chromebooks, school and medical supplies, and whatever else it takes to make the transition from the normal school day and classroom setting, to our homes. *We are stronger and better together!*

NSPMA and its business partners will continue to provide guidance and be a resource as updated information is available and will make it accessible through our website. Our members are encouraged to share any resources or effective measures they’ve implemented during these times of being closed, isolated and practicing social distancing. For my district and in my professional opinion, the facilities staff have become even more “essential” than they’ve ever been. They’re at the frontlines cleaning, disinfecting, maintaining and whatever else it takes to ensure that a safe, warm, efficient and clean environment is ready and waiting for when our students and staff return. I shared the below article with my staff and believe it to be truer than ever. “Now is the time for the cleaning industry to shine”. Continue to check in with your staff and their well-being and mental health. Many staff will let their dedication and work ethic blind their own health and personal care needs.

*We are stronger and better together!*

<https://www.cleanlink.com/news/article/Now-Is-The-Time-For-The-Cleaning-Industry-To-Shine--25287>

I think we’re all looking forward to when we can return to “normalcy” in our districts. Unfortunately, I’m not sure that will ever happen and the way we conduct our facilities business is changed forever. This isn’t meant as a negative, we’ve been changing and adapting our mission to meet the needs of our students, staff and community related to our facilities for decades. There are no other professionals more ready and eager to take on the next challenge related to school facilities than us.

*Thank you for all that you’re doing and will continue to do as Facilities Professionals!*

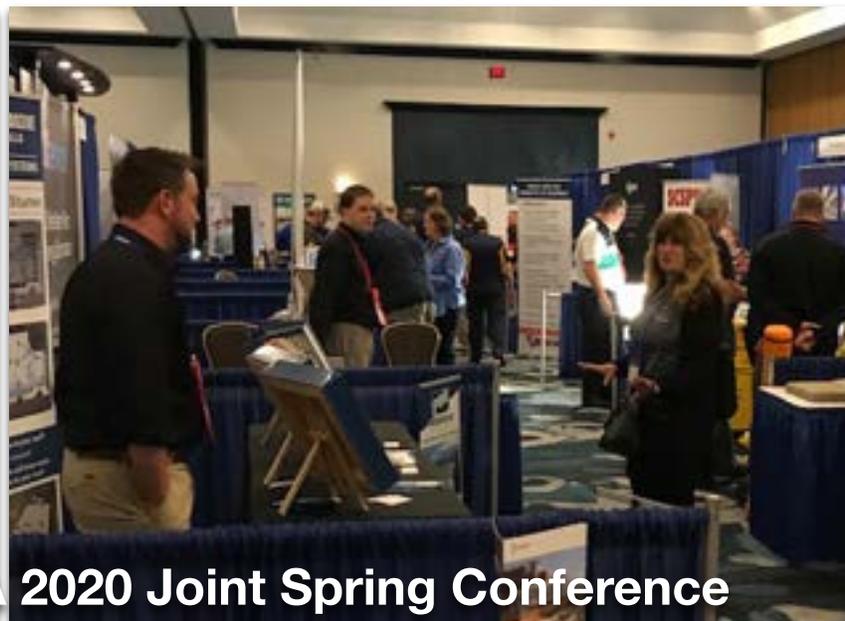
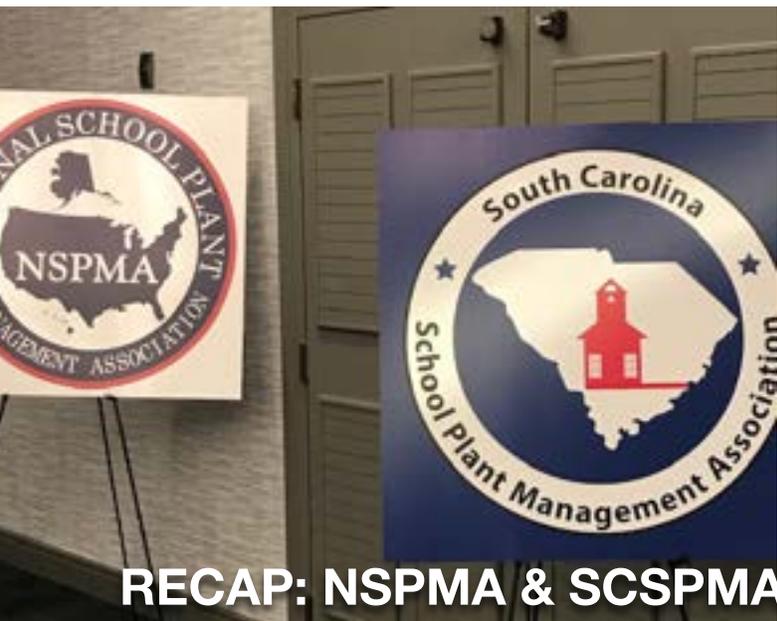
*We are stronger and better together!*

*Sincerely,*

*Keith*



**Check out COVID-19 resources and information for school facility departments [\(HERE\)](#).**



## RECAP: NSPMA & SCSPMA 2020 Joint Spring Conference

The NSPMA & SCSPMA 2020 Joint Spring Conference and Expo was held in February at the Embassy Suites by Hilton Oceanfront Resort in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. The NSPMA was delighted to partner with the SCSPMA to bring facility professionals from the state of South Carolina and all across this nation together to network, collaborate, and share successes. Not only successes as professional organizations and school facility managers, but the celebration of the successes of our school systems in providing quality educational opportunities for students. How extremely fortunate and blessed we all are to work in a profession that has a direct impact on the lives of children every day. The research is clear that a safe, functional, well-maintained, and aesthetically pleasing learning environment has a direct impact on student performance and their overall well-being.



Keynote speaker Merlyna Valentine with Past President Dr. Rick Walters

The NSPMA and SCSPMA Boards worked diligently to design a complete conference program that met the needs of all

registered facility directors and business partners/sponsors. We appreciate all of our business partners/ sponsors that joined us in beautiful Myrtle Beach to help support the conference and attendees. This year the trade expo was SOLD OUT well in advance of the conference. The continued commitment of our business partners/sponsors will remain vital to the success of our organizations, and we cannot thank them enough for their

contributions. Equally important, is the NSPMA & SCSPMA membership. the lifeblood of our organizations. The engagement of this diverse group of attendees from around the country added value to the experience. This year we had record attendance at the conference and representation from over 30 states. The wealth of facility knowledge at the conference was amazing and all in attendance were able to take advantage of that through networking, collaborating sessions, and meaningful keynote presentations.

## Shedden and Watkins Recognized at 2020 Annual Joint Conference

At this year's annual conference in Myrtle Beach, SC on February 11, 2020, highlights of the 25<sup>th</sup> NSPMA & 50<sup>th</sup> South Carolina SPMA Joint Conference included announcements of the 2020 Pat Cochrane Memorial Award and the National School Plant Manager of the Year Award.

**William E. Shedden, Supervisor of Maintenance and Custodial Services for Kingsport City Schools, Tennessee is this this year's Cochrane award recipient.**

Mr. Shedden's dedication to the profession of school plant management is evident through his leadership of being a board member for 11 years and serving for four years as president of the Tennessee School Plant Manager Association (TSPMA) and serving as board member for the National School Plant Manager Association for three years, 2011-2013. Bill was elected at this year's conference to serve on the NSPMA Board of Directors for the next three years as the new Vice President. In Bill's short 11.5 years of facilities/school plant management career he has accomplished winning the TSPMA and NSPMA Plant Manager of the Year Award, 2018 and 2013 respectively. Bill is only the second person in Tennessee to win both these state and national honors.

Bill's leadership record among his colleagues demonstrates his effectiveness. Through his leadership, the Tennessee School Plant Management Association has grown from 64 school districts to 92 school districts and annual conference from 56 vendors to 92 vendors. He has led extensive energy savings program in both Kingsport (25% savings) and Hawkins County (32% savings), as well as overseeing a solar project of 20 sites, generating 1,250 megawatts of power that resulted in extensive decreases in energy bills. This was the first school system in Tennessee to generate solar on TVA's.

**The 2020 School Plant Manager of the Year is Keith W. Watkins, Assistant Director of Facilities for the City School District of New Rochelle, New York.**

Mr. Watkins is in his 3<sup>rd</sup> year of his current position with a total of over 30 years in school facilities operations and management. Mr. Watkins exemplifies every trait desired within a facilities director as demonstrated daily by his innovative and creative skill sets. In his 30 years of service Mr. Watkins is known as a resource and go to person. Keith has shown he is a dynamic leader with a great drive to advance any initiative that is put before him.

As Assistant Director of Facilities, Keith performs his responsibilities with four core values; leadership, service, communication and integrity. These qualities are a constant that he applies to all problems. He is a solution provider, using research and data to provide innovative solutions while seeking to integrate best practices.

Mr. Watkins' dedication to the profession of school facilities management is evident through his leadership and many accomplishments. His continuing education has earned him proudly the New York State Certified Director of Facilities (CDF) after a rigorous training program in 2014. Keith's leadership and service includes being Past President of the New York State School Facilities Association (NYSSFA), serving as a former School Board member in his community of Phoenix CSD and currently serving as the President of the National School Plant Manager Association (NSPMA).



*William E. Shedden and Keith Watkins*

# 2020 NSPMA Scholarship Winners



**Congratulations 2020 NSPMA Scholarship Winners! The board announced the following recipients at the 2020 Conference. Good luck to our winners in their future educational endeavors!**

- **James Sheppard III**, West Memphis, Arkansas, plans to pursue Mechanical Engineering at Arkansas State University
- **Alice Buchanan**, Richmond, Virginia, plans to pursue Communications at Virginia Commonwealth University
- **Mateo R. Perez**, Wildwood, New Jersey, plans to pursue Mechanical Engineering at New Jersey Institute of Technology
- **Garrett Watkins**, Pawling, New York, currently pursuing Business Administration & Actuarial Science at North Carolina State University
- **Christopher Mars**, Conway, Arkansas, plans to pursue Biochemistry at University of Central Arkansas
- **Brooklyn Ray**, Fort Smith, Arkansas, plans to pursue Biochemistry at University of Central Arkansas

## SAVE THE DATE

### NSPMA & SCSPMA

JOINT CONFERENCE

& TRADESHOW EXPO

FEBRUARY 14-17, 2021

Registration Opens April 10th!!!

*Join us at the Kingston Plantation,  
Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.*



**Keith Watkins, CDF**  
President, NSPMA 2020/21  
Past President & Executive  
Board Member, NYSSFA

[WWW.NSPMA.ORG](http://WWW.NSPMA.ORG) [WWW.SCSPMA.ORG](http://WWW.SCSPMA.ORG)



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